



# Department of Justice

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## **VIRGINIA MAN RETURNED TO THE UNITED STATES TO FACE CHARGES OF PROVIDING MATERIAL SUPPORT TO AL QAEDA**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – A Virginia man arrested in Saudi Arabia nearly two years ago has been returned to the United States to face charges of providing material support to al Qaeda, a designated foreign terrorist organization, the Department of Justice announced today.

Ahmed Omar Abu Ali, 23, formerly of Falls Church, Virginia, arrived in the United States late Monday from Saudi Arabia. An indictment returned by a federal grand jury in the Eastern District of Virginia was unsealed following Ali's arrival in the United States. The six-count indictment charges Ali with: conspiracy to provide material support and resources to al Qaeda, a designated foreign terrorist organization, in violation of 18 U.S.C. Section 2339B; providing material support and resources to al Qaeda, in violation of 18 U.S.C. Section 2339B; conspiracy to provide material support to terrorists, in violation of 18 U.S.C. Section 2339A; providing material support to terrorists, in violation of 18 U.S.C. Section 2339; contribution of services to al Qaeda, in violation of 50 U.S.C. Section 1705(b) and 31 C.F.R. Section 595.204; and receipt of funds and services from al Qaeda, in violation of 50 U.S.C. Section 1705(b) and 31 C.F.R. 595.204.

Ali appeared this morning before Magistrate Judge Liam O'Grady, at U.S. District Court in Alexandria, Virginia.

"There is no greater priority for the Department of Justice than the protection of American citizens from terrorist attacks," said Assistant Attorney General Christopher A. Wray of the Criminal Division. "We remain vigilant in the face of the threat of attacks from our terrorist enemies, and we will continue to work hard to identify and disrupt any plot to damage our national security."

U.S. Attorney Paul McNulty of the Eastern District of Virginia, whose office investigated and prosecuted the Ali case with the assistance of the Counterterrorism Section of Criminal Division at the Department of Justice, said: "After the devastating terrorist attack and murders of September 11th, the defendant turned his back on America and joined the cause of al Qaeda. He now stands charged with some of the most serious offenses our nation can bring against supporters of terrorism."

The indictment, returned by a federal grand jury on February 3, 2005 and unsealed today, alleges that in or around September 2002, Ali advised a co-conspirator whom he had met on previous travels to Medina, Saudi Arabia, of his interest in joining al Qaeda. The indictment alleges that Ali intended to become a planner of terrorist operations like Muhammad Atta and Khalid Sheik Muhammad, well-known al Qaeda terrorists associated with the September 11, 2001 attacks. The indictment further alleges that between September 2002 and June 9, 2003 – the day Ali was arrested in Saudi Arabia – that Ali and another co-conspirator discussed plans for

Ali to assassinate U.S. President George W. Bush. Ali and the co-conspirator allegedly discussed two options for assassinating President Bush: an operation in which Ali would get close enough to the president to shoot him on the street; and an operation in which Ali would detonate a car bomb. Ali allegedly received a religious blessing from another co-conspirator to carry out the plan to assassinate President Bush.

According to the indictment, Ali met with several co-conspirators between September 2002 and June 9, 2003, offering himself as a person committed to furthering the objectives of al Qaeda. The indictment alleges that during that time frame, Ali received cash payments from an individual associated with al Qaeda to purchase a laptop computer, a cellular telephone and books, for the purposes of providing material support to al Qaeda. The indictment further alleges that co-conspirators discussed with Ali the manner and means by which he could provide material support to al Qaeda, including conducting a terrorist operation and establishing an al Qaeda cell in the United States. Ali allegedly received training from co-conspirators in Saudi Arabia in weapons, explosives and document forgery.

The indictment alleges that Ali provided material support and resources to terrorists, knowing and intending that they were to be used in preparation for, and for carrying out, the assassination of the President of the United States.

If convicted of the charges, Ali faces a maximum sentence of 80 years in prison.

An indictment is merely an accusation and the defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty at trial beyond a reasonable doubt.

The Ali investigation was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

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